

well the importance of balancing their budgets even when times are tight. Just as Hoosier families must make tough decisions about how to manage their budgets, so, too, must we in Congress make those tough choices about where to invest and what to cut.

I have always supported a balanced budget amendment because it is another important tool that can be used to help get our fiscal house in order. Having a balanced budget amendment in place is crucial to the country going beyond speaking about tough decisions and actually making them. I am aware this will not be easy and that tough decisions that affect many people will have to be made to match our revenues with our spending priorities. We have to live within our means.

We are facing significant fiscal challenges, and the American people expect us to come together on a bipartisan basis and to do something that will more effectively deal with them.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today we begin debate on H.J. Res. 2, the balanced budget amendment. This resolution is similar to the amendment that nearly passed the Congress over 15 years ago. I can only imagine how much improved our current fiscal situation would be today if the amendment would have passed then. In that time, we have seen the national debt increase from just over \$5 trillion then to more than \$15 trillion now.

This rapid rise in public debt endangers our currency and creates deep economic uncertainty. For some of that time, we had a balanced budget; and we did it with a government divided between the political parties. It was not easy to negotiate, but we made it happen. We need to get back to balanced budgets and go further to pay down our debt. A balanced budget amendment will require us to take that action.

We cannot endlessly pile up debt. That is a recipe for disaster, and we have to turn things around. To help us accomplish that, we need a constitutional amendment ratified by the American people.

H.R. 3346, THE EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. This past week, I joined with Congressman LLOYD DOGGETT and with many other Democratic colleagues to introduce the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act.

If Congress fails to pass this bill by the end of the year, Americans who have lost their jobs not by any fault of

their own will begin losing their unemployment benefits in January. By mid-February, 2.1 million will have lost their benefits, and by the end of 2012, six million will have, which includes 34,600 Tennesseans.

Congress has never allowed emergency unemployment benefits to expire when the unemployment rate is anywhere close to where it is now—9 percent. This extension not only will help the unemployed, but it will also promote economic recovery.

The Congressional Budget Office has declared that unemployment benefits are “both timely and cost-effective in spurring economic activity and employment.” The Economic Policy Institute has estimated that preventing UI benefits from expiring could prevent the loss of over 500,000 jobs. They are timely, targeted and temporary—the best way to stimulate our economy. In addition, there are benefits for the States that are having problems with their unemployment insurance programs and with certain extensions there.

I urge the Republicans to join with us in passing this Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. LAMBORN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, the big spending policies of the Obama administration have failed America. Millions of Americans have lost their homes, their jobs—and even their hopes for a brighter future. Our economy has stalled, and the American people are looking for solutions.

This week, the House will vote on a balanced budget amendment. It is an honest and bipartisan solution to the problem of overspending that threatens our economic recovery and prevents job creation. Forty-nine States, including Colorado, comply with a balanced budget amendment. Spending cuts, caps and promises, though helpful, are only temporary. A balanced budget is permanent.

When the Federal Government starts living within its means, the Nation's job creators will have the confidence to create more jobs. That certainty is essential to restoring our economy and putting Americans back to work. In an otherwise bleak economy, a balanced budget amendment is our brightest ray of hope.

OUR RIGHT TO VOTE IS UNDER ATTACK

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, our right to vote is under attack. Photo ID laws on the books in nearly a dozen States, including in my home

State of Georgia and pending in 35, are most troubling.

Proponents say State-issued photo ID laws prevent voter fraud, but in-person voting fraud has not been a significant problem throughout the years. The problem was that too many people went to vote for President Obama. An estimated 21 million people do not have current government-issued photo IDs. The numbers are even higher for blacks and Hispanics and other minorities. The Texas legislature passed one of the worst laws whereby a concealed-weapon permit qualifies as a voter ID while a student ID does not. The Justice Department should vigorously challenge these voter ID laws.

Nothing is more fundamental, ladies and gentlemen, than our right to vote. We must reject any attempts to curb citizens in the exercise of their right.

SUPPORTING THE PASSAGE OF A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. MARCHANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, today the House is scheduled to consider House Joint Resolution 2. This bill proposes a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I am a very proud cosponsor of this legislation.

Earlier this year, the Texas Legislature called on Congress to propose and submit to the States a balanced budget amendment. I am pleased that the House is taking the first step today to fulfill this request by Texas and other States. As a former city council member and mayor and State representative, I was always required to present a balanced budget.

We must act now before we further ruin the economic futures of our children and grandchildren. We cannot ignore our fiscal situation any longer. The Federal Government should balance its budget.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me today in voting in favor of this resolution.

SUPPORT THE STOCK ACT

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, it has been 4 days since the CBS News program “60 Minutes” ran a troubling piece on insider trading in this very House. Mr. Speaker, you and I and our colleagues are the only people in this august body today who are exempt from insider trading rules.

How do we expect the public to take us seriously about anything we do when there is the belief that people here are enriching themselves from the knowledge they gain on the job? Even the perception of wrongdoing undermines the trust in the democracy.

The good news is that Ms. SLAUGHTER, myself, and now 55 of our colleagues have joined together to put an

end to this practice. The STOCK Act that I rise and encourage my colleagues to join us on would stop trading on congressional knowledge. It would put Congress on the same playing field of every teacher, firefighter, small business owner, and investor. Then we can get down to the business of making America right—by creating jobs. I encourage my colleagues to join me.

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BREAK THE CYCLE OF RECKLESS SPENDING

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of House Joint Resolution 2 and sending a balanced budget amendment to the United States Senate and to the States. Congress has nobly, yet unexpectedly, tried seven times to stop the increasingly massive growth in our national debt. At the first attempt in 1985, with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, our national debt was \$2 trillion, or \$8,700 for every American. Today our national debt is \$15 trillion, \$48,500 for every American, higher than it has ever been in American history. Our current spending environment has failed to create jobs and is threatening our standard of living and our national security.

While the Founding Fathers could not foresee a nation this stricken with debt, they did recognize the danger to our prosperity and instilled a constitutional process that gives us the flexibility to deal with this crisis. As Thomas Jefferson said: I place economy among the first and most important republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of dangers to be feared.

Congress has a rare opportunity to break the cycle of reckless spending that has taken us to this current fiscal breaking point and ensure the fiscal financial stability and prosperity for our children and our grandchildren. I urge adoption of the resolution.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY VETERAN TREATMENT COURT

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the opening of Santa Barbara County's first veteran treatment court. Last week our country came together to remember and pay respect to our veterans, and I was humbled and honored to participate in memorial services honoring our veterans, 50,000 of whom live on California's central coast. Their sacrifice is never forgotten, just as our work to support them is never finished. And that's why I support this new innovative and collaborative treatment court in my congress-

sional district, which will better serve our veterans, especially those struggling with substance abuse, mental health issues, or other disorders. This veterans court fills a critical gap in care for our veterans by helping former servicemembers who are struggling and in pain.

Mr. Speaker, it's our duty to serve those who have served us so gallantly. Our veterans have sacrificed and shown their unquestioning commitment to this country; and veteran treatment courts, like the one in Santa Maria, provide another straightforward way for us to better serve them. So I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Santa Barbara County for taking this critical step in supporting our veterans by establishing this veteran treatment court.

THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, every month Americans sit down at kitchen tables or computers to balance their checkbooks and bank accounts to ensure their spending doesn't overwhelm their way of living. I've been at that kitchen table for those discussions. Now the United States Congress is finally coming to the table to have a similar discussion with the American people.

By passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we tell the American people we are serious about putting our financial house in order. No longer will we overpromise and overspend at the expense of trillions of dollars and our children's future.

This week I will stand with my colleagues to support a notion that seems foreign within the beltway, that we cannot spend more than we take in. The fact that this is a radical concept in Washington, D.C., demonstrates just how out of touch this town has become and how far we have to go. But getting to where we need to be won't occur without the critical step we take this week to pass a balanced budget amendment. This action puts us in line towards economic recovery, sustainability, and, above all else, with the needs and priorities of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support the balanced budget amendment.

WELCOMING ESPN TO HOUSTON

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome ESPN's College GameDay to the campus of the University of Houston. This is the first time in the history of that show that the University of Houston and the city of Houston has been given this honor.

The University of Houston Cougars, led by Heisman hopeful Case Keenum, is the highlighted game, as the 10-0 Cougars face the SMU Mustangs this Saturday. The Cougars will push for an undefeated season and potential at-large BCS bowl opportunity.

The University of Houston has a long, storied tradition of athletic success, including 55 NCAA individual championships and 17 NCAA team titles, 19 college football bowl appearances, five NCAA men's basketball Final Fours, and a trip to the College World Series.

The University of Houston has received the Tier-One research university distinction from the Carnegie Foundation. The University of Houston is one of only three Carnegie-designated Tier-One public research universities in Texas.

The University of Houston is also known as a first-generation school, for many of the students are the first in their families to attend college. Our undergraduates choose from 120 majors and minors. The University of Houston also offers 139 master's, 54 doctoral, and three professional degree programs.

The University of Houston is the second most ethnically diverse major research university in the United States. Students come from as many as 137 nations and from across the Nation.

As a proud alumnus of the University of Houston, I salute the successes of the athletic and academic programs and welcome ESPN to our campus today.

JOBS FAIR

(Mr. REICHERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, we've heard some of the partisan comments this morning, and I think America is tired of that. America needs jobs now, and they're looking at us to work together.

There's been a lot of discussion and debate around job creation and economic recovery—rightly so. But I believe we all want to put America back to work, Democrats and Republicans together. We all want that. We must work together now to make that happen. Just because we have different ideas doesn't mean we can't work together.

ADAM SMITH and I, both from Washington State, in fact, next week will be putting together a jobs fair that we call Helping Identify Real Employment in America. We're going to do that together, a Democrat and a Republican. There will be 75-plus different vendors, different businesses who have jobs, actually have jobs waiting. We're going to match employees with employers, bring them together so they can find jobs. And our hope is that before Christmas, before Thanksgiving, ADAM SMITH and I can get some people back